

Mr. Speaker, please join me today in commemorating the life of Coach Phil Ratliff for his service to the student athletes of Marshall University, James Madison University, and the University of North Carolina at Charlotte; in addition to the countless lives he impacted in his community.

RECOGNIZING DONALD ELLIS  
WILLIAMSON, M.D.

**HON. ROBERT B. ADERHOLT**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, October 22, 2015*

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the long and devoted public service of Donald Ellis Williamson, M.D. After serving more than two decades as Alabama's State Health Officer and three years as the state Medicaid Commissioner, Dr. Williamson is stepping down from these positions next month.

Dr. Williamson attended the University of Mississippi School of Medicine, graduating Cum Laude in 1979. He pursued his internship and residency at the University of Virginia, and was certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine in 1982.

With his education complete, Dr. Williamson then began his long career in public health. After serving four years as the State Tuberculosis Control Officer in Mississippi (1982–1986), he held a series of positions in the Alabama Department of Public Health. He began as the Director of the Division of Disease Control (1986–1989) before serving as the Director of the Bureau of Preventive Health Services (1989–1992). On November 18, 1992, he started his service as the head of the Department.

During his tenure, Dr. Williamson became known for addressing key public health issues, such as disaster preparedness and advancing the health of children, in the name of improving health for all Alabamians. For example, in recent years, he led the state health efforts related to Hurricane Katrina in 2005, and also those related to the April 2011 tornadoes. He was responsible for the design & implementation of the state's Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), known as ALLKIDS. This was one of the first Children's Health Insurance Programs in the nation and lowered the rate of uninsured children in Alabama from 20 percent to under 7 percent. He was also intent on doing a better job of reducing infant mortality and increasing children's immunization rates.

I wish Dr. Williamson all the very best as he steps down from the Department of Public Health and moves into his new role as president of the Alabama Hospital Association. I know that he will bring fresh insight to the Association and carry the organization to new heights. I look forward to working with him in this new position.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF  
MASON GREGORY

**HON. TRENT KELLY**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, October 22, 2015*

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Mason Gregory of Mooreville, Mississippi who joined his Heavenly Father on Monday, October 12, 2015.

Only 12 years old, Mason was a 7th grade student at Mooreville Middle School. He excelled at sports and was a member of the Mooreville Junior High Football team as well as Saltillo Park and Recreation baseball.

Outside of school, Mason was an active member of New Hope Baptist Church where he loved being a part of the youth group.

Mason spent most of his time outdoors, and his favorite activity was hunting with his dad.

Full of happiness and love, Mason was adored by his family, friends, and teammates.

Survivors include his parents, Bert and Angel Gregory of Tupelo; sister, Anna Gregory; grandparents, Mike Seawright (Norma) of Flora and Betty Stembidge (Mike) of Mooreville; his special cousin, Ally Grace Bounds who was like a sister to him.

He was preceded in death by his grandparents, Anderson and Nudane Gregory.

My thoughts and prayers are with Mason's family and friends during this difficult time.

HONORING DONNA CARPENTER  
FOR RECEIVING THE SOUTHEAST  
TOURISM SOCIETY'S BEACON  
AWARD

**HON. RICHARD HUDSON**

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, October 22, 2015*

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Donna Carpenter, who serves as President and CEO of the Cabarrus County Convention and Visitors Bureau, for receiving the Southeast Tourism Society's Beacon Award. The Beacon Award recognizes an individual who best exemplifies outstanding leadership in the pursuit of excellence and who has advanced the tourism industry.

Ms. Carpenter joined the Cabarrus County Convention and Visitors Bureau as President and CEO in 2009, but has been actively involved in the Charlotte area for nearly fifteen years. Ms. Carpenter has been instrumental in the improvement of the Cabarrus County and Charlotte-area tourism industry, working with leaders in the area to improve infrastructure development and create long-lasting relationships between local municipalities. One of Ms. Carpenter's greatest achievements during her time at the Cabarrus County Convention and Visitors Bureau has been her leadership in ensuring the implementation of the "Destination 2020 Plan," a proposal to develop Cabarrus County as a premier travel destination and outline key components for reaching this goal.

Furthermore, Ms. Carpenter has worked tirelessly to grow the image of Cabarrus County's tourism industry and connect with visitors and residents alike. Under her leadership, the Cabarrus County Convention and Visitors Bu-

reau office, as well as the Visitor's Center, were relocated to better serve the area and act as a central hub for visitor activity. As a result of her efforts to improve the tourism industry in our area, the Cabarrus County Convention and Visitors Bureau was accredited by the Destination Marketing Accreditation Program by Destination Marketing Association International in 2013.

In addition to her work within the Cabarrus County and Charlotte-area tourism industry, Ms. Carpenter is actively involved in our community. She is a member of several area organizations and serves on multiple boards, including the Cabarrus County Chamber of Commerce. As a proud alumnus of the university I am extremely grateful for her involvement on the University of North Carolina at Charlotte's Advisory Board. Clearly, Ms. Carpenter is an asset to our area, and I look forward to seeing all that she will accomplish in the future.

Mr. Speaker, please join me today in congratulating Donna Carpenter for receiving the Southeast Tourism Society's Beacon Award, as well as her dedication to making Charlotte and Cabarrus County a world-class tourism destination.

COMMENDING THE WORK OF DR.  
EARL BROOKS, II

**HON. MARLIN A. STUTZMAN**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, October 22, 2015*

Mr. STUTZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the fifteen-year tenure of Dr. Earl Brooks, as President of Trine University in Angola, Indiana.

Having once been a student at Trine University, it is an honor to recognize Dr. Brooks for his many years of service to the academic community in Northeast Indiana.

During his fifteen years at Trine, Dr. Brooks has significantly increased enrollment while maintaining a remarkable, above-average career-placement percentage for his students. He transitioned the university from undergraduate to graduate and doctoral degree status and even moved university athletics to the NCAA.

Mr. Speaker, I submit an article from the publication, Business People, highlighting Dr. Brooks' fifteen-year tenure and his many notable accomplishments.

In closing, I would like to thank Dr. Brooks for his distinguished service and wish him well as he continues to lead Trine University.

[From Business People, August 1, 2015]

GIVING CREDIT WHERE IT'S DUE

(By Jon Detweiler)

While The American College President Study reports a downtrend nationally in average leadership tenure—from eight and a half years in 2006 to an average of seven years in 2011—Trine University President Dr. Earl D. Brooks II completes 15 years at the helm, with ongoing plans firmly in place for years to come. When Brooks stepped into leadership 15 years ago, he was the youngest college president in the state. Now, he ranks second on the list of longest tenures at Indiana colleges and universities.

Why is Trine celebrating Dr. Brooks' tenure? What has defined his success over the past 15 years? His list of accomplishments is